

1 In the claims:

2 1. A system for publishing a first document object to users of a network, wherein the
3 first document object is not previously available to users of the network, the system
4 comprising:

5 means for creating link relationships between document objects;

6 means for making document objects not previously located on the network
7 accessible to users of the network;

8 means for distributing link relationships to users of the network; and

9 means for enabling users of the network to use link relationships to
10 retrieve the document objects not previously located on the network.

11 2. The system of claim 1, wherein a user of the network creates one or more link
12 relationships, and the same user makes the document object accessible to other users by
13 having the document object.

14 3. A method for creating access to a first document object to users of a network,
15 wherein the first document object is not available or not easily accessible by users of the
16 network, the method comprising:

17 allowing a first user of the network to create a link relationship between
18 the first document object and a second document object that is available to other
19 users of the network;

20 storing the link relationship in one or more link directories;

21 making the first document object accessible to users of the network;

22 providing users of the network access to the link relationship; and

23 enabling users of the network to use the link relationship to retrieve the
24 first document object, wherein the link relationship provides users of the network
25 with information relating the first document object to the second document object
26 accessed by users of the network.

27 4. The method of claim 3, wherein the step of providing users of the network access
28 to the link relationship comprises providing access to the link relationship only to
29 authorized users.

30 5. The method of claim 3, further comprising authorizing users of the network to
31 perform the allowing step .

32 6. The method of claim 3, wherein the allowing step comprises:

33 a first user creating or locating a first document object not previously
34 available to other users of the network;

1 the first user locating a second document object on the network wherein
2 the second document object is related to the first document object in some manner
3 determined by the first user; and

4 the first user creating a link relationship between the first document object
5 and the second document object.

6 7. The method of claim 3, wherein the step of making the first document object
7 accessible to users of the network comprises:

8 transmitting a copy of the first document object to one or more servers;

9 determining a storage location for the transmitted first document object on
10 one or more host computers associated with the one or more link directories
11 storing the link relationship between the first document object and the second
12 document object;

13 assigning a network address to the first document object stored on the one
14 or more host computers;

15 storing the network address for the first document object in the link
16 relationship; and

17 storing the first document object on the one or more host computers.

18 8. The method of claim 3, wherein the first document object comprises annotated
19 commentary created by the first user regarding the second document object.

20 9. The method of claim 7, wherein the storage location for the first document object
21 on the one or more host computers is determined by a user of the network responsible for
22 managing the one or more link directories storing the link relationship.

23 10. The method of claim 7, wherein the storage location for the first document object
24 on the one or more host computers is determined by the first user creating the link
25 relationship.

26 11. The method of claim 3, further comprising a step of targeting users of the network
27 to which access to the link relationship will be provided by designating characteristics of
28 the targeted users.

29 12. The method of claim 3, wherein the step of enabling users to use the link
30 relationship to retrieve the first document object comprises authorizing users to retrieve
31 the first document object.

32 13. The method of claim 3, wherein the first user is also responsible for the second
33 document object, and the first user is identified as responsible for the second document
34 object to other users of the network accessing the link relationship.

- 1 14. The method of claim 3, wherein other users accessing the first document object
2 are presented with one or more link relationships created by the first user.
- 3 15. The method of claim 7, wherein the network address for the first document object
4 is stored in a network address field of a link reference to the first document object.
- 5 16. The method of claim 3, wherein the created link relationship comprises a link
6 reference including a network address containing a bookmark.
- 7 17. A method for broadcasting a first document object to users of the network
8 comprising:
- 9 creating a link relationship between the first document object and a second
10 document object which is any document object selected by the user;
- 11 entering one or more user characteristics;
- 12 comparing the entered characteristics to available user characteristics;
- 13 targeting users using the comparison; and
- 14 transmitting the document object to the targeted users.